

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ADDIS 02903 010115Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SOE-02 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00
COME-00 EB-08 DOE-15 H-01 INR-10 INT-05 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-05 ICA-11 OES-07 SP-02
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R 301340Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8893
INFO AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
DIA WASHDC
SECDEF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 2903

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ETRN, ENRG, PBOR, UR, ET
SUBJECT: ETHIOPIAN PETROLEUM SITUATION REPORT

REF: ADDIS ABABA 1958

1. SUMMARY. FUEL SHORTAGE IN ADDIS EXPECTED TO CONTINUE FOR AT LEAST TWO WEEKS.SHORTAGE DUE TO INCREASED PMGSE DEMANDS, STEMMING LARGELY FROM AN INCREASE IN STORAGE CAPACITY IN AND LONGER SUPPLY LINES TO AREAS OF MILITARY OPERATIONS. RECENT INDICATIONS ARE THAT PMGSE PLANS TO DIVERSIFY SUPPLY SOURCES TO LESSEN DEPENDENCE UPON SOVIETS.
END SUMMARY.

2. FOR THE FIRST TIME IN SEVERAL MONTHS ADDIS AGAIN IS EXPERIENCING A SHORTAGE OF GASOLINE. LONG LINES OF VEHICLES ARE BACKED UP AT STATIONS DESIGNATED TO SELL TO POVS AS WELL AS AT THOSE SELLING TO TAXIS. EVEN THOSE STATIONS SPECIFICALLY DESIGNATED FOR DIPLOMATIC VEHICLES HAVE HAD FUEL ENOUGH TO STAY OPEN ONLY FOR LIMITED HOURS
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 ADDIS 02903 010115Z

EACH DAY. ACCORDING TO AN INFORMED INDUSTRY SOURCE, THIS SITUATION IS EXPECTED TO CONTINUE FOR AT LEAST A FORTNIGHT.

3. THE CURRENT SHORTAGE, ACCORDING TO THE SAME SOURCE, IS DUE TO INCREASED PMGSE MILITARY DEMANDS, PARTICULARLY IN THE MEKELE AREA. SOURCE STATED THAT STORAGE CAPACITY IN THE MEKELE AREA ALONE HAS BEEN INCREASED TO 280,000 LITERS FOR

GROUND PRODUCTS AND 300,000 LITERS FOR JET FUEL. FACILITIES CONSIST OF 50,000 AND 80,000 LITER PERMANENT TANKS SHIPPED FROM RUSSIA. FUEL DEMAND FOR THE MEKELE AREA OVER THE NEXT MONTH (OR AS SOON AS IT CAN BE FILLED) IS 3 MILLION LITERS.

4. PART OF THE INCREASED DEMAND IS FOR JET FUEL. AFTER HAVING RELIED EXCLUSIVELY FOR THE PAST FEW MONTHS ON SUPPLIES FROM THE SOVIETS, THE PMGSE HAS AGAIN REQUESTED MOBIL TO BEGIN SUPPLYING JET FUEL. MOBIL HAS INDICATED IT COULD SUPPLY A PORTION, BUT NOT ALL, OF THE ETHIOPIAN DEMAND. NEGOTIATIONS ARE STILL UNDERWAY. SOURCE BELIEVES THERE IS LITTLE DANGER OF PMGSE NATIONALIZING FOREIGN PETROLEUM COMPANIES, DESPITE SOVIET URGING TO DO SO.

5. SOURCE BELIEVES ETHIOPIANS ARE CURRENTLY TRYING TO DIVERSIFY FUEL SUPPLY SOURCES IN ORDER TO REDUCE DEPENDENCE UPON SOVIETS. SOURCE ALSO BELIEVES LARGE CURRENT FUEL DEMANDS IN MEKELE AREA ARE TIED TO NEW AIRPORT CONSTRUCTED THERE BY SOVIET TECHNICIANS USING REINFORCED ALUMINUM GRIDS.

6. A FEW RAILROAD TANK CARS ARRIVED IN ADDIS THIS PAST WEEK. ACCORDING TO SOURCE, THEY WERE ATTACHED TO TRAIN IN DJIBOUTI. SOURCE EXPECTS REGULAR TRAIN ARRIVALS FROM DJIBOUTI ABOUT TWICE A WEEK, TO INCLUDE A FEW TANK CARS EACH TRIP. LIMITATIONS ARE DETERMINED BOTH BY REPORTED 300 TON TOTAL TRAIN CAPACITY (DUE TO TEMPORARY NATURE OF

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PAGE 03 ADDIS 02903 010115Z

BRIDGE RECONSTRUCTION) AND LOAD REQUIREMENTS FOR OTHER PRIORITY GOODS.

7. COMMENT: LONGER SUPPLY LINES TO AND INCREASED STORAGE CAPACITY IN BOTH NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN FRONTS ARE LARGELY RESPONSIBLE FOR ADDED STRAIN ON INTERNAL TRANSPORTATION FLEET. ALTHOUGH THE TRANSPORTATION FLEET HAS INCREASED SLIGHTLY, THE EFFICIENCY OF THE DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM HAS NOT. THE AVAILABILITY OF PETROLEUM PRODUCTS WHERE NEEDED WHEN NEEDED IS LIKELY TO CONTINUE TO BE PROBLEMATIC.
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